



NEWS RELEASE

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Public Forum Set for Small Business Owners to Comment on Federal Regulatory Enforcement

(Concord, NH) -- Small business owners, community leaders and representatives of trade associations in New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island and Connecticut who are concerned about excessive enforcement of federal rules can voice their complaints at a **U.S. Small Business Administration Regulatory Fairness Board Forum in Concord, New Hampshire on Thursday, May 29, 2008 from 9:30 a.m. to Noon.**

The forum will be held in the auditorium at NH Department of Environmental Services, 29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH.

SBA National Ombudsman Nicholas Owens, members of the SBA's Region I Regulatory Fairness Board (which serves the states of New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island and Connecticut), and representatives of federal regulatory agencies will hear comments and complaints about regulatory enforcement and compliance and will discuss the impact of federal regulations on small business.

"One of the leading concerns small business owners face is unfair enforcement of federal regulations. They also worry about telling their stories because they fear retaliation by federal agencies," Owens said. "Small business owners want to play by the rules and comply with federal regulations. We want to encourage Federal regulators to provide effective compliance assistance, rather than go straight to the penalty stage. Regulatory enforcement should be effective, not excessive."

This forum offers small business owners a chance to express their concerns about federal compliance practices and to learn how to more effectively deal with federal regulatory requirements.

Comments and complaints presented during this forum will be directed to the appropriate federal regulatory agency. This information will also be shared with federal officials in the National Ombudsman's Annual Report to Congress, and with leadership of federal regulatory agencies to assist them with their enforcement actions.

The forum is open to the public. Those wishing to testify must contact Alice Zachos of the SBA's New Hampshire District Office at 603 225-1607 or email at alice.zachos@sba.gov by Tuesday, May 27, 2008. Should small business owners or representatives be unable to attend, written testimony may be sent in advance of the forum to be included in the public record.

Comments and concerns about federal enforcement actions can be addressed directly to SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman at 1-888-734-3247 (REGFAIR). For more information about the National Ombudsman and the New Hampshire forum, please visit the web site www.sba.gov/ombudsman.